

Buildable Lands Program Guidelines



**WASHINGTON STATE
COMMUNITY, TRADE AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Building Foundations for the Future

Cover

Under Washington's Buildable Lands Program, information on growth and development is being collected and evaluated.

Photo: Spring Air Northwest, Courtesy of the Port of Olympia

Buildable Lands Program Guidelines

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The Buildable Lands Advisory Committee dedicates this document, the *Buildable Lands Program Guidelines*, to the memory of Jeanette Johnson, of the Clark County Planning Department, who served on the committee until her death in 1999.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
GMA Goals and Requirements	3
Purposes of the Buildable Lands Program	5
Summary of Local Process Steps	7
Principles	9
Key Definitions	11
General Approach	13
What Is the Preparation Stage?	13
Who Collects the Key Data and Completes an Evaluation?	13
What Is the Key Data to Collect?	14
Data Collection Tools	14
Types and Timing of Data Collection	15
Baseline Data	16
Annual Data	16
Evaluation Data	18
Post-evaluation Data	19
Evaluation Methodology	21
Urban Areas Monitoring	21
Part 1 – Urban Land Needs	21
Part 2 – Urban Land Supply	25
Part 3 – Urban Land Needs and Supply Comparison	28
Suggested Data Types for Evaluation Methodology	29
Urban Land Needs Calculation	29
Urban Land Supply Calculation	30
Conclusion	30
Next Steps After Initial Evaluation	31

Figures

Figure 1a – Urban Residential Land Needs Worksheet	24
Figure 1b – Urban Employment Land Needs Worksheet	25
Figure 2 – Urban Land Supply Worksheet	27
Figure 3 – Urban Land Needs and Supply Comparison Worksheet	28

Appendices

Appendix A – Measures to Achieve Growth Objectives	35
Appendix B – Optional Questions and Ideas	41
Appendix C – Baseline Data	43
Appendix D – Buildable Lands Statute	45

Introduction

our local jurisdiction needs to collect data on buildable lands and analyze how planning goals are being achieved. How do you get started? What data needs to be collected? What methods do you need to use for analysis? What actions do local officials need to take based on the data collected?

The purpose of this guidebook is to assist local governments in developing a Buildable Lands Program that will be workable in their communities and consistent with growth management statutes. It describes the purposes and requirements of the program, a method for collecting data, how to analyze the data collected, and possible ways local communities can respond to the information analyzed.

Amendments to the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1997 created a review and evaluation program requirement, which is often referred to as the Buildable Lands Program. It is required for six urban counties and the cities within their boundaries and is optional for all others. The six counties are Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston.

The program offers the opportunity for local governments to coordinate and analyze land

supply to make sure that they have enough lands for development and to make sure that their GMA comprehensive plans are doing what they are expected to do.

Under the Buildable Lands Program, local governments monitor the intensity and density of development to determine whether a county and the cities within its boundaries are achieving urban densities sufficient to meet state growth projections. If development does not occur at planned levels, then reasonable measures, other than adjusting urban growth areas, need to be identified and appropriate action taken.

The development of thousands of parcels of land in Washington will be analyzed. Local governments will evaluate the density and intensity of residential, commercial, and industrial development. More information will be available about employment, critical areas, and capital facilities.

Local governments required to collect and analyze data under the Buildable Lands Program are the primary audience for this guidebook. However, other cities and counties who choose to undertake work under this review and evaluation program also can use it.

GMA Goals and Requirements

The GMA sets out 14 goals, including one added for shoreline management, to guide local governments. Among the goals are sprawl reduction, concentrated urban growth, economic development, environmental protection, adequate infrastructure, affordable housing, and regional transportation. [See RCW 36.70A.020 and RCW 36.70A.480(1)]. Actual implementation occurs mostly at the local level through a framework that includes:

1. County-wide planning policies.
2. Comprehensive plans.
3. Development regulations.
4. Capital budgets and other ongoing local activities.
5. Optional incentive programs.

Urban growth areas (UGAs) are adopted to include existing incorporated towns and cities, as well as enough other appropriate land for 20 years of urban growth. Urban growth is not to be allowed outside UGAs with certain exceptions. UGAs are to provide for urban densities, generally considered to be a minimum of four units per acre, on average, for the UGA. Natural resource lands outside UGAs are to be designated for long-term commercial agriculture, forestry, and mineral extraction. Critical areas in all counties are

designated for certain kinds of environmentally sensitive lands. In counties, rural lands must be designated for rural uses and densities.

Under the GMA, comprehensive plans and development regulations are subject to “continuing review and evaluation” by each jurisdiction (RCW 36.70A.130). By September 1, 2002, and at least every five years after that, local governments need to take action to review and, if needed, revise their plans and regulations to ensure that they comply with the GMA. In addition to these basic GMA review and evaluation requirements, the six largest counties in Western Washington and the cities within their boundaries also need to meet special requirements for monitoring land supply and urban densities under 1997 amendments to the GMA (RCW 36.70A.215).

Washington State Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) provides technical assistance to guide the growth management process, adopts rules, reviews local plans and regulations, makes grants to participating cities and counties, manages data, and prepares progress reports for the Legislature.

Purposes of the Buildable Lands Program

The primary purposes of the Buildable Lands Program, as described in the statute, are to:

1. Determine whether a county and its cities are achieving urban densities within UGAs by comparing growth and development assumptions, targets, and objectives with actual growth and development that has occurred in the county and its cities.

comply with the GMA, including to increase consistency between actual development and plan assumptions. (See Appendix A for Measures to Achieve Growth Objectives.)

2. Identify reasonable measures, other than adjusting UGAs, that will be taken to

Summary of Local Process Steps

To implement RCW 36.70A.215, jurisdictions need to follow a process for review and evaluation of land supply, compared with their plans and policies. Below is a summary of the steps, not necessarily in order, that each county and its cities are to take. (See other chapters of the *Buildable Lands Program Guidelines* for more detail.)

A. Preparation

- Have a comprehensive plan and development regulations in place, reflecting growth needs and targets, consistent with the GMA.
- Adopt county-wide planning policies to establish a review and evaluation program.
- Provide for methods to resolve inconsistencies in collection and analysis of data.

B. Annual Data Collection

- Identify types of key data (i.e., data “on urban and rural land uses, development, critical areas, and capital facilities” to evaluate land supply), and how they will be collected within each county.
- Collect key data annually, using procedures and methods, as appropriate, to be able to conduct an evaluation every five years.

C. Evaluation

- Gather other data that will be needed for evaluating local progress.
- Evaluate the relevant data at five-year intervals, with the first evaluation completed by September 1, 2002.
- Determine whether the data show inconsistencies in how growth and development occurred, compared to what was envisioned in the local plans and policies, especially for urban densities and land supply.
- Summarize the results of the evaluation.

D. Actions for consistency

- Consider the reasons for any inconsistencies and identify possible actions (other than expanding urban growth areas) to be taken.
- Adopt and implement any necessary actions that are reasonably likely to increase consistency.
- Determine on an annual basis whether the actions taken to increase consistency have been effective and make necessary changes.

E. Maintenance

- Make any necessary adjustments to data collection methods for the next phase.
- Continue the review and evaluation cycle.

Principles

ertain principles apply when implementing the Buildable Lands Program.

1. This guidebook is intended to assist local governments in creating and/or customizing their data systems and technical approaches to comply with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.215.
2. Partnerships and coordination among jurisdictions, especially between each county and the cities within it, are important.
3. Data collection and evaluation should build on the work that local governments have already done, to the extent practical.
4. Common definitions and compatible data will be used whenever possible, especially to facilitate county-wide analysis.
5. Decisions about methodologies to review and evaluate land supply need to consider the realities of funding.
6. The program will evolve over time. More information will become available and jurisdictions will gain more experience as they develop and prepare for the five-year evaluation.
7. Local governments should ensure that land supply assumptions and annual data collection are appropriately documented.

Key Definitions

Buildable Lands – (See definition of lands suitable for development.)

Growth Target – A figure in an adopted policy statement indicating the type and amount of growth (e.g., number of persons, households, or jobs) a jurisdiction intends to accommodate during the planning period.

Key Development Data – Information that is critical to identifying the location, timing, and scope of new development that has occurred. Components may include, but are not limited to, building permits, certificates or changes of occupancy, subdivision plats, zone changes, urban growth boundary amendments, numbers of dwelling units, and critical areas and related buffers. (See also the discussion on basic data sets in the Data Collection section, pages 14 to 19.)

Lands Suitable for Development – All vacant, partially-used, and under-utilized parcels that are: (a) designated for commercial, industrial, or residential use; (b) not intended for public use; and (c) not constrained by critical areas in a way that limits development potential and makes new construction on a parcel unfeasible.

Partially-used Land – Partially-used parcels are those occupied by a use but which contain enough land to be further subdivided without

need of rezoning. For instance, a single house on a 10-acre parcel, where urban densities are allowed, is partially developed.

Sufficient Land Supply – Amount of land necessary to accommodate adopted population and employment forecasts or targets for the 20-year planning period, taking into account any appropriate factors. (For further information, see *Issues in Designating Urban Growth Areas (Part I): Providing Adequate Urban Area Land Supply*, CTED 1992.)

Under-utilized Land – All parcels of land zoned for more intensive use than that which currently occupies the property. For instance, a single-family home on multifamily-zoned land will generally be considered under-utilized. This classification also includes redevelopable land, i.e., land on which development has already occurred but on which, due to present or expected market forces, there exists the strong likelihood that existing development will be converted to more intensive uses during the planning period.

Vacant Parcels – Parcels of land that have no structures or have buildings with very little value.

General Approach

The following section explains what should be done to start implementing the Buildable Lands Program for local governments required or choosing to do so.

What is the preparation stage?

It is assumed that local governments will have adopted a comprehensive plan and development regulations to implement it. Each county and its cities will have considered whether their county-wide planning policies provide for a review and monitoring program. If their policies do not provide for such a program, the county, in consultation with its cities, shall adopt policies to establish one. The policies may include indicators, benchmarks, and other criteria to use in conducting the five-year evaluation.

The preparation stage also is the time for identifying the information that will be needed, how it will be obtained, and other necessary steps to be taken. This includes resolving inconsistencies in collection and analysis of data and resolving any disputes related to adoption of county-wide planning policies for the Buildable Lands Program.

Who collects the key data and completes an evaluation?

Each local government is responsible for collecting, reporting, and evaluating key data. However, it may be more efficient to have the county or regional planning council manage at least some of this for other jurisdictions. Arrangements about sharing responsibilities

can be made through interlocal agreements, contracts, or county-wide planning policies.

For example, a city may contract with the county to collect and maintain its geographic information system (GIS) parcel or land coverage database, while tracking its own development data (such as building permits or certificates of occupancy). The city might then report its data to the county on an annual (or more frequent) basis for incorporation into the county-wide GIS database. When it is time to evaluate the data, the county would provide GIS maps and other information back to the city.

As soon as possible, local governments should decide who will collect development data in unincorporated UGAs. For incorporated UGAs, each city is responsible for collecting its development data, unless other intergovernmental agreements have been reached.

In addition, local governments should provide CTED with information about annual data-collection and other activities to implement the Buildable Lands Program, including reports of the five-year evaluation. This may be done on a county-wide basis, rather than by individual jurisdictions.

Some local governments may choose to track other information beyond the scope of the legislative requirements. See Appendix B, Optional Questions and Ideas.

What is the key data to collect?

Key data to collect is, at a minimum, the information needed to answer basic questions posed by the buildable lands section of the GMA. It may also include other data that local governments decide will help evaluate growth and development in their area. (See Appendix B, Optional Questions and Ideas.)

Minimum questions the data should answer

Here is a series of key questions that the Buildable Lands Program should answer, based on specific requirements of the law. This list is intended to show the types of information that local governments must be collecting in order to, first, complete the evaluation at the end of five years and, second, to determine any subsequent corrective actions.

1. What is the actual density and type of housing that has been constructed in UGAs since the last comprehensive plan was adopted or the last five-year evaluation completed? Are urban densities being achieved within UGAs? If not, what measures could be taken, other than adjusting UGAs, to comply with the GMA?
2. How much land was actually developed for residential use and at what density since the comprehensive plan was adopted or the last five-year evaluation completed? Based on this and other relevant information, how much land would be needed for residential development during the remainder of the 20-year comprehensive planning period?
3. How much land was actually developed for commercial and industrial uses within the UGA since the last comprehensive plan was adopted or the last five-year evaluation completed? Based on this and other relevant information, how much land would be needed for commercial and

industrial development during the remainder of the 20-year comprehensive planning period?

4. To what extent have capital facilities, critical areas, and rural development affected the supply of land suitable for development over the comprehensive plan's 20-year timeframe?
5. Is there enough suitable land in each county and its cities to accommodate the county-wide population growth for the remainder of the 20-year planning period (based on the forecast by the state Office of Financial Management and the subsequent allocations between the county and cities)?
6. Does the evaluation demonstrate any inconsistencies between the actual level of residential, commercial, and industrial development that occurred during the five-year review period compared to the vision contained in the county-wide planning policies and comprehensive plans and the goals and requirements of the GMA?
7. What measures can be taken that are reasonably likely to increase consistency during the subsequent five-year period, if the comparison above shows inconsistency?

Data collection tools

Several types of tools are used to track development activity. They include GIS, permit tracking systems, basic spreadsheets, aerial photography, field collection, and other traditional data collection techniques. The cost associated with each tool varies greatly. Each jurisdiction needs to take into account its local circumstances in choosing the appropriate tool. A jurisdiction should also

determine if a “full count” is necessary or if there is enough development activity to justify a “sampling” approach.

Geographic Information Systems

GIS offers a practical approach to collect, analyze, and display information. GIS can be used to manage parcel-level land use inventory. The inventory can be updated to show other information, e.g., what was permitted and what was actually built. GIS tracking systems allow layers of data to be linked to specific places and shown on maps. While the long-term benefits are great, GIS startup requires a significant investment in labor, time, and capital.

Permit tracking systems

Permit tracking systems are used by some local jurisdictions to track individual permits through their respective processes. A variation on this approach is tracking certificates of occupancy or other measures to show actual development. Jurisdictions may need to add new fields to their systems to collect additional development information as required by the Buildable Lands Program.

Database/spreadsheet

Some small jurisdictions have very little development activity and most of the development information is recorded on paper. These jurisdictions may find simple desktop database or spreadsheet programs beneficial in organizing and tabulating development activity.

Aerial photography

Data captured from aerial photographs, such as orthophotos and planimetrics, can provide detailed site coverage information. Digital orthophotos can be overlaid with parcels for land use update and correction using a GIS.

The costs associated with orthophotos and planimetrics are very high.

Satellite imagery

Digital imagery captured by satellites can be used to identify ground features and can be imported directly into GIS systems after analysis. These data can be used to evaluate land cover characteristics, such as tree cover or built-up areas, for large areas. Depending on the resolution of the satellite data, transferring these characteristics to individual parcels may be inappropriate. While aerial photography offers a greater level of detail, satellite imagery is more cost effective for covering large areas.

Field collection

There are two basic ways to collect information in the field: a windshield survey (conducted from a vehicle) and a walking survey. The windshield survey is useful for tracking actual development in large areas where variety in land uses is minimal, such as in rural areas. In urban areas, where the uses are more complex and the densities greater, walking surveys are best at identifying the type and amount of actual development.

Types and timing of data collection

The buildable lands law became effective in July 1997. It requires certain kinds of data to be collected at least annually, with an evaluation to be completed every five years. The first five-year evaluation must be completed by September 2002.

A preliminary step in collecting data is to make sure that it can reflect the difference between development that occurs outside UGAs and development that occurs inside UGAs. While counties would usually have the responsibility for tracking data in unincorporated UGAs, each county and its

cities can make other arrangements to fit the local situation.

Essentially, four types of data need to be collected. They may be used to support the analysis described in the Evaluation Methodology chapter. The first type is existing or “baseline” data, to the extent it is available. The baseline data provides information about conditions and expectations that the local government used in preparing and implementing their plan or in establishing its Buildable Lands Program. Generally, this is contained in the comprehensive plan or it may be based on background information that was used to develop the plan or possibly performance measures (benchmarks, indicators, etc.) that were developed soon after the plan’s adoption. In addition, local governments may need to update parcel records and/or land coverage inventories. (See Baseline Data, in the next column.)

The second type of data tells the story of actual development and factors affecting it, based on new information observed during each five-year review and evaluation cycle. It should be used to help make comparisons between what was planned and what actually happened. Local governments may collect development data on an ongoing basis and by annual updates throughout the five-year cycle. (See Annual Data, in the next column.)

The third type of data is additional evaluation data. This may be gathered near the end of the five-year review period, as necessary, to more fully evaluate land supply and other needs. (See Evaluation Data, on page 18.)

A fourth kind of data is post-evaluation data. This may be used by a local government in identifying and implementing other actions that could be taken to increase consistency.

Baseline Data

Baseline data describes the expectations and vision contained in the county-wide planning policies, comprehensive plans, or development regulations. It also provides information about assumptions and conditions at the time the county-wide planning policies, comprehensive plan, or development regulations were adopted. Finally, it may include updated information about parcel records and land use. This is the kind of data that local governments can use to compare with what actually happens at the end of the five-year evaluation period. Baseline data will vary among jurisdictions, depending on the information and objectives used for the policies, plans, and regulations. (See Appendix C, Baseline Data, for examples.)

Annual Data

These data tell the story of actual development and factors affecting it during each five-year period. It must be collected annually or on an ongoing basis.

Most of the emphasis behind the buildable lands legislation is on tracking growth and actual densities within UGAs and using this information as part of the five-year evaluation. However, a range of annual data collection requirements goes further than this:

The review and evaluation program shall encompass land uses and activities both within and outside of urban growth areas and provide for annual collection of data on urban and rural land uses, development, critical areas, and capital facilities to the extent necessary to determine the quantity and type of land suitable for development, both for residential and employment-based activities. [RCW 36.70A.215(2)(a)]

In addition, if jurisdictions take actions at the end of the five-year period to increase

consistency, they need to annually monitor these measures.

This section briefly describes a range of data for annual collection. A later chapter in this guidebook, Evaluation Methodology, describes in more detail various steps and data items for tracking urban development activities and densities. Keep in mind that jurisdictions are required to monitor indicators of critical areas, capital facilities, and rural development only to the extent necessary to determine the remaining quantity and type of land suitable for development. However, these indicators can be valuable for other kinds of tracking and also help provide context for actual development that occurs in urban growth areas.

The basic types of annual data are described below in four categories: (1) Urban and rural land uses and development; (2) Critical areas; (3) Capital facilities; and (4) Measures adopted to increase consistency:

1. Urban and rural land uses and development

Counties should design and implement appropriate data collection systems to monitor development activities both inside and outside the UGA on an annual basis. This should include data items that address the annual volume of residential and employment-based development. The information may be derived from plat records, building permits, certificates of occupancy, and any other relevant data source. These indicators should be used to address the questions of whether growth under the GMA is actually occurring in areas where it was originally intended and at what density or intensity.

While types of data collected will vary from county to county, here is a suggested list of types most likely to be useful:

D. Employment-based data

A. Permit data, distinguishing between what is permitted inside and outside the UGA:

- Approved building permits (number and type each year; date of application and issuance).
- Approved subdivision permits (number and type; date of application and issuance).

B. Construction data, based on certificates of occupancy or other methods, distinguishing between what is constructed inside and outside the UGA:

- Residential units added each year (number, type, and amount of land).
- Industrial sites developed or redeveloped each year (number, type, and amount of land).
- Commercial sites developed or redeveloped each year (number, type, and amount of land).
- Reduction of existing residential, industrial, or commercial uses each year (number and type, as appropriate).

C. Land use adjustments which affect the buildable land supply, including but not limited to:

- Additions or subtractions to the amount of land in UGAs.
- Additions or subtractions to the amount or type of residential, commercial, and industrial development allowed in UGAs.
- For counties, additions or subtractions to the amount of rural lands or to the amount or type of residential, commercial, and industrial development allowed in rural areas.

- Square footage of commercial and industrial improvements for each site developed or redeveloped.
- Estimate of potential number of employees for each site developed or redeveloped.

2. Critical areas

Local governments should collect annual data on critical areas so they can incrementally update their land inventories with the most current information on critical areas that relates to the reduced development potential for the parcel(s) on which they are located. Some of this may have already been collected during urban areas monitoring (Part 1, Step 1 of the Evaluation Methodology chapter). Critical areas data can be used to more accurately calculate the supply of buildable land without critical areas constraints during the five-year review and evaluation. New field inventories may not be feasible unless sufficient funding is available to local governments.

Specifically, critical area adjustments may include but are not limited to:

- New areas set aside as a result of the Endangered Species Act requirements.
- Additions or subtractions to the amount of land identified as critical areas or critical area buffers in which development is precluded.

3. Capital facilities

Data on capital facilities should be incrementally updated. At a minimum this data should include the location and amount of land identified for major capital facilities which will be subtracted from the overall 20-year land supply. Local governments may also collect data on capital facilities that are required for approval of development. In most jurisdictions, this involves updating of

information on water and wastewater services, including service areas and locations.

4. Measures adopted to increase consistency

A five-year evaluation may demonstrate inconsistency between development that actually occurred and what was envisioned in the county-wide planning policies, comprehensive plans, and GMA goals and requirements. If so, the local government is to adopt measures that are reasonably likely to increase consistency. Then the measures must be tracked on an annual basis to monitor their effectiveness. The data chosen for annual monitoring would be highly dependent on which measures, if any, local governments choose.

Evaluation Data

Additional evaluation data may be necessary to supplement the baseline and annual data. This can be gathered prior to the end of the five-year review period, or as needed, to more fully evaluate land supply and development needs. Required data for this evaluation is shown below with an asterisk (*). Also see the chapter, Evaluation Methodology, for a more detailed approach to comparing development that actually occurred with what was envisioned. The Evaluation Methodology chapter has a list of types of data to be gathered (see page 21) in order to calculate urban land needs and supply. Examples of evaluation data that appear especially helpful include the following:

- Population change since the beginning of the five-year review.
- Most recent population forecast or other growth data from the state Office of Financial Management.
- Job growth, past or future.

-
- Compilation of annual data from the previous five years.
 - Densities achieved in UGAs, based on actual development. *
 - Comparison between growth objectives and actual development over the past five years. *
 - Other information, if appropriate, to add context to development that occurred over the previous five years (e.g., economic factors).
 - Calculation of land needed for residential, commercial, and industrial use for the remainder of the 20-year planning period. *
 - Measures being used to achieve urban growth objectives. (See Appendix A for a partial list of measures).

Post-evaluation Data

After the initial evaluation is completed, local governments will need to consider whether other actions are necessary and, if so, which ones to take. Post-evaluation data can be helpful for this task. For example, a jurisdiction would review the results of the

evaluation and gather any other information needed to answer the minimum questions. (See page 14.) If an inconsistency has been found between what was envisioned and what actually occurred, the county and its cities must adopt and implement measures that are reasonably likely to increase consistency during the subsequent five-year period. This action step presumes some analysis about why an inconsistency occurred and what measures or techniques are likely to correct it.

In addition to the results of the initial evaluation, other data could be useful in analyzing and selecting the most appropriate actions to be taken. For example, information about economic factors may help explain why development did not occur as previously envisioned. This information might lead to taking a different action than if the data show that infrastructure was not available for urban development in a particular area.

Once measures are adopted to increase consistency, they must be monitored annually for effectiveness. The data chosen for annual monitoring would be highly dependent on which measures local governments are taking.

Evaluation Methodology

valuations are to be completed every five years, beginning September 1, 2002. This chapter provides guidance to jurisdictions about a methodology for evaluating the availability of buildable lands under the GMA at the end of each five-year period. It is intended to allow flexibility to the various jurisdictions while ensuring clarity and a minimum level of consistency. Clarity and consistency are needed to ensure that the GMA is properly implemented, that GMA work can continue as intended, and that the legislative intent of the monitoring is met.

Urban Areas Monitoring

The evaluation methodology described below offers a recommended approach to calculating the required data for UGAs in the five-year report. This approach assumes the existence of a GIS with a reliable county-wide database. Counties and cities may need to modify this approach to fit their available data, the degree of sophistication of their data systems, and funding. A list of suggested types of evaluation methodology is included near the end of this chapter.

The following three steps (✓) provide a framework to review and evaluate the status of buildable lands every five years in urban growth areas. This information will help determine if growth is primarily occurring where intended by the policies adopted by local jurisdictions.

Flexibility is built into the process offered in the guidelines to accommodate various

approaches and techniques that jurisdictions have developed for growth management planning since 1990. It recognizes the development of their original county-wide planning policies and GMA comprehensive plans as well as plan monitoring systems required by either their county-wide planning policies or GMA plans.

This methodology consists of a comparison between two sets of calculations: urban land needs and urban land supply. Comparing the two calculations will help indicate whether sufficient buildable land is available for future urban development under current practices.

✓Part 1 – Urban land needs

Estimate the number of acres needed to accommodate future urban residential and employment growth based on the average net density of actual development within the UGA during the preceding five-year period.

1. Determine actual net densities achieved on land developed for residential and employment uses within the UGA since your GMA plan was adopted or since the last five-year buildable lands evaluation was conducted. This period of time will be referred to as the “review period” throughout the remainder of the guidelines. Summarize net density results by comprehensive plan density categories or other appropriate density category.

Residential and employment development density calculations are described separately below:

- a) Residential: Determine total gross area developed for new residential uses during the density review period. Subtract critical areas and buffers to the extent that development was precluded. Existing records on critical areas within a residential development (e.g., designated critical areas in tracts, easements, or dedications) may provide the basis for this calculation. Also subtract other areas devoted to non-residential uses (i.e., roads and other public purpose areas such as open space, parks, stormwater detention facilities, etc.) to arrive at total net residential acres developed. Divide the number of new housing units within these developments by the number of net residential acres developed to arrive at actual net residential densities achieved, expressed as housing units per net residential acre.
- b) Employment: First, determine total gross area developed for new employment uses during the density review period. Subtract critical areas and buffers (to the extent that development was precluded), and public purpose lands from the total area developed to arrive at total net employment acres developed. Second, estimate the total square footage of improvements for all employment uses. Include all appropriate floors of structures. Divide total square footage of improvements by the total buildable land area (excluding appropriate critical areas) in square feet to arrive at

the floor area ratio (FAR) for employment-based development. An alternative method that may be used is an employment density calculation based on a ratio such as employees per net acre, if employee estimates are available.

2. Based on the actual development densities observed during the density review period, determine the net residential and employment land requirements for the remaining portion of the 20-year planning period within urban comprehensive plan density categories. The degree to which jurisdictions relate future residential and employment land requirements by type and density range to specific plan density categories may vary considerably, depending upon the level of detail present in existing baseline growth assumptions and needs analyses prepared for the adoption of a jurisdiction's GMA comprehensive plan. Some jurisdictions may be able to report future land requirements for each designation on their land use plan map, while others may report future land use needs with limited reference to comprehensive plan density categories. Estimates of future residential and employment land use needs should also include any land considered under-utilized and consequently "redevelopable" during urban land supply calculations.

To accomplish this step, first review your current 20-year UGA (1) housing needs by type and (2) employment growth projections by sector or other applicable category. Then, within each housing and employment projection category, subtract the number of (1) net new housing units produced and (2) net new jobs created since the start of your 20-year planning period, in order to arrive at the number of additional housing units and additional jobs expected during the remaining

portion of the 20-year planning period. Convert these additional housing units and jobs into net residential and employment acres required using the actual average net densities calculated in Part 1, Step 1.

For the purpose of estimating future needs, likely future trends should be considered. This could be done if it can be demonstrated that future development in the remainder of the planning period is likely to occur at different densities. For example, observed densities may largely reflect buildout of low-density lots created or vested prior to GMA plan and development regulation adoption, while more recent densities may reflect higher density requirements of the GMA comprehensive plan.

The time it takes to enact density-enhancing code amendments and for the development community to take advantage of the amendments may make most development taking place in the earlier period following plan adoption similar to densities realized in the pre-adoption period. Therefore, the data local governments collect about development/construction occurring following GMA plan adoption may be for numerous projects vested under pre-GMA densities or projects vested prior to code amendments designed to implement GMA densities. Separating the pre-GMA data

from the post-GMA data is advisable, where possible, to ensure the most credible information for evaluation.

Density results should be evaluated in terms of the longer planning period. Short-term trends may not be sustained for the full 20 years. For example, the vacant lands inside the UGAs that are easiest to develop will be developed earlier in the planning period. Market conditions supporting high-density redevelopment in urban centers and designated high-density redevelopment areas will become more feasible when more of the vacant lands within the UGAs have been developed. These lands will have to accommodate higher density to justify the costs of assembling and redeveloping.

Calculate residential and employment land requirements separately as described below:

- a) Residential: Divide the number of additional housing units anticipated by the average number of housing units per net residential acre calculated in Part 1, Step 1(a), to arrive at the total net residential acres needed. (See Figure 1a, page 24.)

Figure 1a. Urban Residential Land Needs Worksheet (Sample)

	Urban Residential Comprehensive Plan Designations				
	Housing Type/Density Categories: (May include categories such as low, medium, high density, or other residential density categories.)				Total
A. Current 20-year projected increase in housing units					
B. Actual net increase in housing units since start of 20-year planning period					
C. Additional increase in housing units anticipated during remaining portion of 20-year planning period [A-B]					
D. Actual net density of new housing per acre observed during density review period					
E. Estimated additional net residential land needs in acres [C/D]					

b) Employment: Multiply the number of additional jobs (by sector) anticipated by an average square footage assumption per employee (by sector). Divide the total square footage requirement for new employment anticipated (by

sector) by the FAR calculated in Part 1, Step 1(b). Convert the total net employment land area requirement from square feet to acres by dividing by 43,560 (the number of square feet in an acre). (See Figure 1b, page 25.)

Figure 1b. Urban Employment Land Needs Worksheet (Sample)

	Urban Employment Comprehensive Plan Designations			
	Employment Sector/Designation Categories: (May include commercial, industrial, or other employment categories.)			Total
A. Current 20-year projected increase in employment				
B. Actual net increase in employment since start of 20-year planning period				
C. Additional increase in employment anticipated during remaining portion of 20-year planning period [A-B]				
D. Square footage need per employee				
E. Total square footage of floor area needed for additional jobs [CxD]				
F. Actual floor area ratio (FAR) observed during density review period				
G. Estimated additional net employment land needed in square feet [E/F]				
H. Estimated additional net employment land needed in acres [G/43560]				

✓Part 2 – Urban land supply

Estimate the number of acres of residential and employment land suitable for development within each basic type of urban comprehensive plan/zoning designation. (See Figure 2, page 27.)

1. Identify lands that are potential candidates to accommodate future growth – vacant, partially-used, and under-utilized lands. (See *Issues in Designating Urban Growth Areas (Part I): Providing Adequate Urban Area Land Supply*, CTED 1992.)
2. Estimate net buildable area of vacant, partially-used, and under-utilized land for accommodating either residential or employment growth by considering:
 - Critical areas and buffers, to the extent that development is precluded as determined by local development regulations affecting development in and around critical areas (i.e.,

mitigation, density transfer techniques, etc.).

- Zoning requirements, including setbacks and minimum lot size requirements (allowing “sliver” parcels to be removed).
- Right-of-way requirements consistent with results from Part 1, Step 1(a).
- Other development-specific public use requirements (parks and open space, stormwater detention/retention, community and recreation facilities, and schools) consistent with results from Part 1, Step 1(a).

Estimates of net buildable area for existing vacant residential lots in your jurisdiction may need to be handled separately if these lots are considered unlikely to be further subdivided. Such parcels represent only one building lot, regardless of size. To ensure that the buildable land area represented by these parcels accommodates only one additional housing unit at the net residential density

experienced during the density review period, only consider the land area associated with one housing unit at the net residential density derived in Part 1, Step 1(a) when summing the net buildable area of these parcels. This should also be done for any parcels in the development pipeline with preliminary approval in your jurisdiction. An alternative method may be used to account for these parcels in terms of additional housing unit “capacity” rather than acres.

3. Subtract land where it is assumed that adequate water and wastewater infrastructure will not be available over the comprehensive plan’s 20-year timeframe.
4. Subtract land known to be needed for future regional capital facilities and other major public uses not specified in Step 2 (i.e., utility and transportation corridors, landfills, sewage treatment plants, stormwater management facilities, schools, open space, parks and recreational facilities, etc.). If specific locations for all future regional public facilities are not known, subtract a percentage of vacant, partially-used, and under-utilized land assumed to be needed for these purposes.
5. Identify and subtract a percentage of remaining land (residential, commercial,

and industrial) which is assumed will not be available for development, within the plan’s 20-year timeframe. Assume that a certain percentage of vacant, under-utilized, and partially-used lands will always be held out from development. (See previous CTED guidebook *Issues in Designating Urban Growth Areas (Part 1): Providing Adequate Urban Area Land Supply*, CTED 1992.)

6. Finally, total the amount of net buildable land suitable for development. Summarize total net acres by comprehensive plan density categories. Optionally, also summarize total net acres by lot size category within each comprehensive plan density category. In their comprehensive plans, some jurisdictions may have measured land supply only by broad categories such as single family, multifamily, commercial, and industrial. Such jurisdictions would only be able to report land supply by broad, generalized land use types or housing densities. If a jurisdiction has “mixed-use” designations or zoning, buildable land supply may be proportionately allocated within mixed-use designations/zones for residential vs. employment growth based on actual development experience during the density review period within mixed-use designations/zones as determined in Part 1, Step 1.

Figure 2. Urban Land Supply Worksheet (Sample)

	Urban Comprehensive Plan Designations									
	Residential					Employment				Totals
	Housing Type/Density Categories:				Sub-total	Employment Sector/Designation Categories:			Sub-total	
A. Total gross acres of vacant, partially-used, and under-utilized land										
B. Total area above considered unbuildable due to critical areas, zoning, right-of-way, and public use requirements										
C. Total net buildable area of vacant, partially-used and under-utilized land [A-B]										
D. Total net buildable area of land without adequate water/waste water infrastructure during remaining portion of planning period										
E. Total net buildable area of land with adequate water/waste water infrastructure during remaining portion of planning period [C-D]										
F. Total net buildable area of land required for future public facilities and public purpose lands										
G. Total net buildable area of land not required for future public facilities [E-F]										
H. Total net buildable area of land assumed not to be available for development during remaining portion of planning period										
I. Total net buildable area of land assumed to be available and suitable for development during remaining portion of planning period [G-H]										

For certain jurisdictions, credit for some existing vacant commercial and industrial space towards potential employment buildable land supply for accommodating

future employment increases may be warranted when documented vacancy rates for existing structures are exceptionally high. For example, some jurisdictions in recent

years have experienced sizable employment gains without accompanying new commercial and industrial construction. Employment densities can also increase by adding a shift at a manufacturing plant, by increasing the number of employees in an office building, or by the growing number of people working in their homes. These employment gains are not accounted for by counting acreage of land developed for employment activities or square footage of building space constructed. The employment land supply may be adjusted to

account for this type of employment growth accommodation.

✓Part 3 – Urban land needs and supply comparison

Compare results of Part 1, Step 2 (urban land needs) with Part 2, Step 6 (urban land supply) to determine “sufficiency” of suitable buildable lands estimate within each comprehensive plan/zoning designation. (See Figure 3, below.)

Figure 3. Urban Land Needs and Supply Comparison Worksheet (Sample)

	Urban Comprehensive Plan Designations									
	Residential (Acres)					Employment (Acres)				
	Housing Type/Density Categories:				Sub-total	Employment Sector/Designation Categories:				Sub-total
Totals										
A. <u>Land Supply</u> : Total net buildable area of land assumed to be available and suitable for development during remaining portion of planning period [Figure 2, line I]										
B. <u>Land Needs</u> : Estimated additional net residential and employment land needs in acres [Figure 1A, line E, or Figure 1B, line H]										
C. <u>Difference</u> : UGA surplus (+)/ deficit (-) in land supply relative to need during remaining portion of planning period [A-B]										

A jurisdiction may optionally choose to convert its buildable land supply estimate (Row A, Figure 3) into a housing unit or employment capacity estimate using the actual development densities observed during the density review period (from Part 1, Step 1). These capacity estimates could then be directly compared to the additional housing units and jobs expected during the remaining portion of the 20-year planning period (from Part 1, Step 2).

Suggested data types for evaluation methodology

Some of the important basic types of data that may need to be collected, in order to eventually evaluate the availability of buildable lands in a jurisdiction, could include but are not limited to those listed below. These are the data local governments may need to collect to support the analysis conducted in Parts 1, 2, and 3 of the Evaluation Methodology chapter.

Urban land needs calculation (Relates to Part 1 of the methodology)

Actual Net Residential Density Calculation

- Recorded plats and date of recording.
- Building permits and date of issuance.
- Certificates of occupancy and date of issuance.
- Gross acres of land developed for residential use.
- Housing units by type built during five-year review period.
- Critical areas designated within residential lands.
- Areas of public purpose lands, roads and rights-of-way, open space, parks, stormwater detention facilities.

- Comprehensive plan designation and zoning associated with residential development.
- Vesting date of development application.

Actual Employment Net Density Calculation

- Building permits and date of issuance.
- Site plans and date of approval.
- Gross acres of land developed for employment-based use.
- Square footage of commercial and industrial improvements.
- Estimate of potential employees at full occupancy for development.
- Critical areas precluded from development within areas developed for commercial or industrial use.
- Areas of public purpose lands, roads and rights-of-way, open space, parks, stormwater detention facilities.
- Comprehensive plan designation and zoning associated with employment-based development.
- Vesting date of development application.

Additional Housing Units Expected and Net Residential Acres Needed Calculation

- Actual population, housing unit or household growth experienced and its distribution (by jurisdiction and UGA).
- Demolitions of residential units.
- Forecasted population, housing unit or household growth and its distribution.

Additional Jobs Expected and Net Employment Acres Needed Calculation

- Actual employment growth experienced and its distribution (by jurisdiction and UGA).
- Demolitions of commercial and industrial structures.
- Forecasted employment growth and its distribution.

Urban land supply calculation (Relates to Part 2 of the methodology)

Gross Acres of Vacant, Partially-Used, and Under-Utilized Land Calculation

- Acres of vacant, partially-used, and under-utilized land.
- Comprehensive plan designation and zoning.

Net Buildable Area of Vacant, Partially-Used, and Under-Utilized Land Calculation

- Critical areas to the extent that they preclude development.
- Zoning requirements (setbacks, minimum lot size requirements).
- Right-of-way and other development-specific public use requirements.
- Land assumed to not have water and sewer infrastructure available within the 20-year planning period.
- Land necessary for future regional capital facilities (utility and transportation corridors, landfills, sewage treatment

plants, stormwater management facilities, schools, open space, parks and recreational facilities).

- Market availability information.

All assumptions made during the data collection and evaluation periods need to be well documented. Initial data may be less extensive than what is developed in later years. Some local governments may want to track information beyond that necessary to meet legal requirements. They may do so separately or through a coordinated intergovernmental process.

Conclusion

If the results of this evaluation demonstrate that the remaining buildable land supply does not match the amount of urban development expected during the remaining portion of the 20-year planning period, corrective measures will be needed. The following chapter, Next Steps After Initial Evaluation, provides more information about this step.

Next Steps After Initial Evaluation

The initial evaluation will have highlighted any inconsistencies between the level of development that occurred during the five-year review period and what was originally envisioned in the local policies, plans, and regulations. This should be considered, along with the goals and requirements of the GMA, in determining the next steps.

If inconsistencies are found between what was envisioned and what actually occurred, the county and its cities must adopt and implement measures that are reasonably likely to increase consistency during the subsequent five-year period. Most pertinent are inconsistencies related to urban densities and land supply for commercial, industrial, and housing needs. This action step presumes some analysis about why inconsistencies occurred and what measures or techniques are likely to correct it.

Other information, besides that contained in the initial evaluation, may be helpful. For example, what was the likely cause of the inconsistency? Was it related to the fact that some development occurring in the early stages of the review period may have been permitted before the local plan development regulations under the GMA were in place? Was it influenced by regional or national economic trends not connected to local growth management decisions? Did permitting decisions get made in a timely way? Did a higher than anticipated amount of development occur in rural areas?

Were there certain areas within a UGA where expected urban development did not occur,

and if so, what measures were in place to encourage urban development there? What other measures are reasonably likely to increase consistency?

In selecting measures or techniques to improve consistency, local government should consider actions that would help achieve urban growth in existing urban areas. A list of suggested measures to achieve urban growth objectives is found in Appendix A. Measures to improve consistency may include educational and incentive programs, as well as changes to regulations and permitting processes. In some cases, amending comprehensive plans and the county-wide planning policies may also be necessary. However, expanding UGAs, for purposes of the buildable lands statute, is a suitable option only when all other appropriate measures have been taken and found ineffective.

If measures are adopted to increase consistency, they must be monitored annually for effectiveness. Care will be needed in deciding who will monitor the measures and how. Some decisions may be purely local and others regional. Choices about monitoring will be highly dependent on which measures local governments are taking. Based on the result of the annual monitoring data, local governments must determine whether the adopted measures, if any, are increasing consistency for relevant factors. They may rescind or revise the measures, as appropriate.

Finally, counties and cities might consider whether anything else should be done to improve the evaluation process. For example, does the system being used provide reasonably accurate data and enough consistency to evaluate the results on a county-wide basis? How have disputes among jurisdictions been resolved? Would

new technology be more effective in collecting or evaluating data?

As with all parts of implementing the Buildable Lands Program, local governments “shall consider information from other appropriate jurisdictions and sources.” [RCW 36.70A.215 (1)]

buildable lands evaluation. At the same time, they will continue monitoring buildable lands and implementing the GMA.

The end of each five-year review and evaluation period blends into the beginning of the next five-year period. Local governments are to track the effectiveness of any new actions taken as a result of the initial

Appendices

Appendix A

Measures to Achieve Growth Objectives

Encouraging urban growth in urban areas and reducing sprawl are two key goals of the GMA. To achieve these goals, per capita land consumption rates must be low enough and compact development must predominate in urban areas. At the same time, people in those urban places need to be able to enjoy a high quality of life. They want growth and development to result in livable communities, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

The following measures provide a partial list of tools local governments should consider using to provide for greater residential densities and employment-based development in UGAs. They may be especially applicable if a local government is considering more ways to achieve urban infill or needing to “adopt and implement measures” to ensure consistency under RCW 36.70.215(4).

Accessory Dwelling Units

- Recommendation: Encourage accessory dwelling units in UGAs.
- Potential Benefits: Accessory dwelling units (“granny flats,” etc.) provide another housing option for changing demographics. They preserve neighborhoods as local residents age and give them a smaller place to live while allowing them to stay in their neighborhood. Densities are increased within existing developed areas with minimal visual disruption.

Capital Facilities Investments

- Recommendations: Give priority to capital facility projects that most support urban growth at urban densities. Provide urban services to help reduce sprawl development and maintain the edge of the urban growth boundary.
- Potential Benefits: Phased, infill development is more cost effective than sprawl and helps retain rural and natural resource lands. Adequate infrastructure to support compact urban growth will help UGAs be livable, attractive places. Outside UGAs, rural lifestyles can be maintained better when infrastructure investments provide for rural needs without encouraging urban encroachment.

Clustering

- Recommendations: Encourage clustering techniques in UGAs where appropriate to ensure that infill development and future urban services can be provided cost effectively. Outside UGAs, use clustering techniques where appropriate to help retain open space, critical areas, and natural resources, provided that the cluster does not provide for more growth than the underlying zone allows and that retained open areas are not redeveloped in the future.
- Potential Benefits: Clustering may allow more efficient use of land in addition to providing open space. The technique also encourages a neighborhood feeling. It allows critical areas to be protected while still permitting both urban and rural development.

Co-housing

-
- Recommendation: Allow co-housing as an innovative form of housing to encourage more housing choices in UGAs.
 - Potential Benefits: It provides another choice in a variety of housing options.

Density Bonuses

- Recommendation: Allow higher density or intensity of development in UGAs than normally permitted as an incentive for achieving other community values such as affordable housing, mixed-use developments, infill, rehabilitating existing structures, etc.
- Potential Benefits: Bonuses can increase densities in urban areas and create an incentive for providing neighborhood amenities. They can also be used as receiving zones to preserve resource lands by buying or transferring development rights from rural to urban areas.

Design Standards

- Recommendation: Adopt design standards in targeted areas to encourage attractive compact development.
- Potential Benefits: They help ensure development is attractive, safe, and consistent with neighborhood character, historic preservation, or other desired features.

Downtown Revitalization

- Recommendations: Develop a strategy to encourage downtown vitality. Include techniques such as promoting mixed residential and commercial uses, reuse of existing buildings/inventory rather than tearing down and rebuilding, and alternative urban landscaping and infrastructure that encourage pedestrian use.
- Potential Benefits: It provides housing and employment options, reduces sprawl development by reusing land within

developed areas and where services are already provided, increases economic opportunities, and contributes to more efficient use of land.

Duplexes, Townhomes, and Condominiums

- Recommendations: Permit duplexes, townhomes, and condominiums in both mixed-use and residential districts of UGAs.
- Potential Benefits: They provide additional affordable housing options and allow more residential units than would be achieved by detached homes alone.

Economic Development Strategy

- Recommendation: Include a strategy for sustainable economic development in the local comprehensive plan. This strategy could include: a downtown revitalization program; incentives for development that meet local goals; transit and transportation system upgrades; enhancement of the natural resources base; an industrial needs assessment; and provisions for timely infrastructure. Intergovernmental, private sector, and regional collaboration is important in this effort.
- Potential Benefits: The strategy can encourage a healthy economy over the long term. A good strategy will help implement the community vision, consistent with resource considerations.

Environmental Review and Mitigation Built into the Subarea Planning Process

- Recommendation: Use this technique for targeted development areas.
- Potential Benefits: This approach expedites a project's permitting decisions while ensuring that infrastructure and

environmental considerations are addressed during the planning phase.

Higher Allowable Densities

- Recommendation: Change the comprehensive plan and development regulations, as necessary, to encourage higher densities where they can be accommodated within UGAs.
- Potential Benefits: Higher densities, where appropriate, provide more housing, a greater variety of housing options, and a more efficient use of scarce land resources. Higher densities also reduce sprawl development and make the provision of services more cost effective.

Industrial Zones

- Recommendation: Limit non-industrial uses in industrial zones. For example, require that any commercial use be sized to primarily serve the industrial needs in the zone. Preclude residential use unless it is accessory to the industrial use.
- Potential Benefits: These limits help ensure that industrial land can be saved for future industrial needs.

Low Densities in Rural and Resource Lands

- Recommendations: Make sure that allowable densities in rural lands are low enough to discourage sprawl development. Generally this means one unit to five, 10, 20, or more acres in rural areas, except for established areas of more intense development [as identified in RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d)]. Ensure that allowable densities in natural resource lands are even lower to discourage sprawl development.
- Potential Benefits: Lower densities outside UGAs protect resource lands, promote development within UGAs where services will be available and are cost

effective to provide, reduce sprawl development, and reduce reliance on cars for transportation.

Maximum Lot Sizes

- Recommendation: Establish maximum lot sizes, consistent with urban densities, for UGAs. This approach may be chosen instead of the “minimum density” approach.
- Potential Benefits: Maximum lot sizes can promote appropriate urban densities, efficiently use limited land resources, and reduce sprawl development.

Minimum Density Requirements

- Recommendation: Require in UGAs that residential development on a site must be built or located in a way that will allow the future achievement of specific minimum urban densities (e.g., five dwelling units per acre).
- Potential Benefits: Minimum densities promote developments consistent with local comprehensive plans and growth assumptions. They reduce sprawl development, eliminate underbuilding in residential areas, and make provision of services more cost effective. They also promote a more consistent neighborhood fabric, reduce street costs, create areas with a more pedestrian scale, and are more transit-friendly.

Mixed Uses

- Recommendation: Allow residential and commercial development to occur in many of the same buildings and areas within UGAs.
- Potential Benefits: This technique can provide a broader variety of housing options, allowing people to live, work, and shop in nearby areas. Mixed uses in the same area encourage more pedestrian and transit-friendly access, reduce the

demand on transportation services and facilities, make goods and services accessible to non-drivers, and reduce peoples' dependence on vehicles for mobility.

Multifamily Housing and Tax Credits

- Recommendation: Provide tax incentives (e.g., property tax exemption program) for multiple-unit housing for targeted areas in certain urban centers as enabled by RCW 84.14.
- Potential Benefits: This encourages increased and improved residential opportunities within urban centers where there is insufficient housing. It is intended to stimulate new multifamily housing construction as well as rehabilitation of existing vacant and under-utilized buildings for multifamily housing targeting both renters and owners.

Narrow Streets

- Recommendations: Encourage or require street widths that are the minimum necessary to ensure that transportation and affordable housing goals can be achieved. Meet public safety needs through design standards that keep traffic at a safe speed.
- Potential Benefits: Narrower streets slow neighborhood traffic and increase livability. They are more pedestrian friendly, enhance the sense of neighborhood, lower capital and maintenance costs, and make more land available to housing and economic-based development.

Phasing Urban Growth

- Recommendation: Incorporate strategies in comprehensive plans and capital facilities plans to phase urban growth as a way to provide for orderly development and encourage infill ahead of "urban fringe" development.

- Potential Benefits: This promotes development near existing urban services, reduces sprawl development, and reduces "hop-scotch" development. It also reduces capital spending, increases efficiency in providing capital facilities, promotes more orderly and cost-effective growth, and promotes more efficient use of scarce land resources.

Small Lots

- Recommendation: Allow or require small lots (5,000 square feet or less) for single-family neighborhoods within UGAs.
- Potential Benefits: Small lots limit sprawl, contribute to the more efficient use of land, and promote densities that can support transit. Small lots also provide expanded housing ownership opportunities to broader income ranges and provide additional variety to available housing types.

Transfer/Purchase of Development Rights

- Recommendation: Develop a program to encourage the purchase or transfer of development authority in order to increase urban densities and decrease non-urban densities within UGAs.
- Potential Benefits: These techniques can protect rural resource lands and reduce sprawl outside UGAs. They also may be used to protect critical areas while still allowing development on lots that contain unbuildable areas. They encourage the more efficient use of land and promote densities where they can be provided most cost effectively.

Transit

- Recommendations: Encourage livable urban communities and neighborhoods by providing public transit systems that are convenient and safe. Also encourage attractive transit-oriented development.
- Potential Benefits: Transit allows denser development with less traffic congestion, reduces dependence on single occupancy vehicles (SOV), and provides transportation options for broader segments of the population who cannot drive (elderly, disabled, children, low-income without vehicles, etc.). Transit-oriented development allows people to more easily use transit systems and helps businesses near transit stations be more accessible. When done well, the result will be desirable urban neighborhoods.

Urban Amenities for Increased Densities

- Recommendations: Identify and provide amenities that will attract urban development in UGAs and enhance the quality of life for urban residents and businesses. Include them as part of the local small lots, increased density, and affordable development package.
- Potential Benefits: Amenities, such as parks, trails, waterfront access, and cultural centers, enhance livability in denser areas. Amenities contribute to the overall design vision of the community and promote livability in UGAs.

Urban Centers and Urban Villages

- Recommendations: Use urban centers and urban villages to encourage mixed uses, higher densities, inter-connected neighborhoods, and a variety of housing types that can serve different income levels.
- Potential Benefits: These centers and villages provide locally-focused shopping

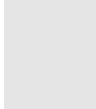
opportunities and urban amenities (parks, schools, civic buildings, etc.) together with increased densities which increase livability and reduce the dependence on SOVs. They are a more efficient use of land, encourage more transportation or mobility options (due to connected streets), and provide for urban services more cost-effectively. Centers and villages create integrated, more complete, and inter-related neighborhoods. These are in stark contrast to stand-alone tracts of single-use developments that are not related to nor connected to the rest of the community or adjacent neighborhoods. They also reduce the need to drive across town for basic services and shopping.

Urban Holding Zones

- Recommendations: Use very low zoning in certain areas adjacent to or within the UGA where municipal services will not be available within the near future. This will help to phase future urban development in an orderly and cost-effective manner. If this zone is for planned residential use, shadow platting and clustering techniques may be used so that a person may still build a house while configuring the lot(s) so that future rights-of-way and sites for future densification are preserved. The remaining lot(s) or sites may be further developed to urban densities when urban services are available. If this zone is for planned industrial use, other kinds of land uses that would discourage future industrial development should not be allowed.
- Potential Benefits: Land in sizes suitable for future urban scale development is protected from sprawl development until municipal services are available to the site.

Appendix B

Optional Questions and Ideas

 Tracking information beyond legislative requirements may be an option some local governments select. Additional information may help provide a fuller picture of growth and development or other desired quality of life indicators. To the extent practical, local governments can include this with their Buildable Lands Program reports. Procedures for tracking optional information could be established either as part of a county-wide agreement or by an individual city or county.

Optional questions the data could answer

As part of the Buildable Lands Program, local governments could also decide to answer questions of their choice. This decision may

be part of a county-wide agreement. A few examples of optional questions are:

1. How has transportation efficiency changed (e.g., vehicle miles traveled)?
2. Has the affordability of housing units changed relative to income?
3. How well have critical areas been protected?
4. Has the number of building permits changed?
5. What effect has the number of lots vested before comprehensive plan adoption had on densities during later years?
6. How have unemployment rates changed?

Appendix C

Baseline Data

The following list reflects some typical types of baseline data a city or county may have. However, actual types of data will vary among jurisdictions, based on the information that was gathered and the results that were envisioned by local governments.

A. *Growth assumptions and targets*, as available, consistent with the comprehensive plan, such as the following examples:

- Anticipated population growth and number of households in 20 years.
- Future residential densities inside or outside urban growth areas.
- Ratio of urban to rural growth.
- Expected availability of affordable housing.
- Future land consumption rate.
- Amount of land to have urban services.
- Future commercial and industrial growth.
- Factors used to calculate amount of land suitable for urban development (e.g., market factor or estimated amount of land precluded from development by critical areas).
- Other economic, environmental, social, and community goals or assumptions related to land supply.

B. *Land capacity and land supply data*, as available, to describe the information

reflected in the local comprehensive plan, such as the following examples:

- Current size of population and number of households.
- Location and size of UGAs.
- Amount of land being used for commercial and industrial activity.
- Average housing density in cities and unincorporated UGAs.
- Amount of land suitable for future development or redevelopment (residential and employment-based).
- Allowable land uses by type and amount (including densities).
- Areas of public purpose lands, roads and right-of-way, open space, parks, stormwater detention facilities, etc.
- Land ownership information (e.g., public or private).
- Recent or current land consumption rate.
- Recorded plats and date of recording (if tracking development at the parcel level).
- Land coverage inventories from aerial photography.
- Existing service areas for water and sewer.
- Other data used to establish growth targets or urban land supply needs for the comprehensive plan.
- Historical data on trends (e.g., annual permit records for five years before comprehensive plan was adopted).

Extra data

Extra baseline data can also be tracked, at local discretion, to monitor other indicators that are not included in the legislative requirements.

Such data include but is not limited to:

- Housing affordability.
- Job growth.
- Commute trip reduction.
- Other selected information to show how local growth issues are being met.

Appendix D

Buildable Lands Statute

RCW 36.70A.215 Review and evaluation program.

(1) Subject to the limitations in subsection (7) of this section, a county shall adopt, in consultation with its cities, county-wide planning policies to establish a review and evaluation program. This program shall be in addition to the requirements of RCW 36.70A.110, 36.70A.130, and 36.70A.210. In developing and implementing the review and evaluation program required by this section, the county and its cities shall consider information from other appropriate jurisdictions and sources. The purpose of the review and evaluation program shall be to:

- (a) Determine whether a county and its cities are achieving urban densities within urban growth areas by comparing growth and development assumptions, targets, and objectives contained in the county-wide planning policies and the county and city comprehensive plans with actual growth and development that has occurred in the county and its cities; and
- (b) Identify reasonable measures, other than adjusting urban growth areas, that will be taken to comply with the requirements of this chapter.

(2) The review and evaluation program shall:

- (a) Encompass land uses and activities both within and outside of urban growth areas and provide for annual collection of data on urban and rural land uses, development, critical areas, and capital facilities to the extent necessary to determine the quantity and type of land suitable for development, both for residential and employment-based activities;
- (b) Provide for evaluation of the data collected under (a) of this subsection every five years as provided in subsection (3) of this section. The first evaluation shall be

completed not later than September 1, 2002.

The county and its cities may establish in the county-wide planning policies indicators, benchmarks, and other similar criteria to use in conducting the evaluation;

- (c) Provide for methods to resolve disputes among jurisdictions relating to the county-wide planning policies required by this section and procedures to resolve inconsistencies in collection and analysis of data; and

- (d) Provide for the amendment of the county-wide policies and county and city comprehensive plans as needed to remedy an inconsistency identified through the evaluation required by this section, or to bring these policies into compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

(3) At a minimum, the evaluation component of the program required by subsection (1) of this section shall:

- (a) Determine whether there is sufficient suitable land to accommodate the county-wide population projection established for the county pursuant to RCW 43.62.035 and the subsequent population allocations within the county and between the county and its cities and the requirements of RCW 36.70A.110;
- (b) Determine the actual density of housing that has been constructed and the actual amount of land developed for commercial and industrial uses within the urban growth area since the adoption of a comprehensive plan under this chapter or since the last periodic evaluation as required by subsection (1) of this section; and

- (c) Based on the actual density of development as determined under (b) of this subsection, review commercial, industrial, and housing needs by type and density range to determine the amount of land needed for commercial, industrial, and housing for the

remaining portion of the twenty-year planning period used in the most recently adopted comprehensive plan.

(4) If the evaluation required by subsection (3) of this section demonstrates an inconsistency between what has occurred since the adoption of the county-wide planning policies and the county and city comprehensive plans and development regulations and what was envisioned in those policies and plans and the planning goals and the requirements of this chapter, as the inconsistency relates to the evaluation factors specified in subsection (3) of this section, the county and its cities shall adopt and implement measures that are reasonably likely to increase consistency during the subsequent five-year period. If necessary, a county, in consultation with its cities as required by RCW 36.70A.210, shall adopt amendments to county-wide planning policies to increase consistency. The county and its cities shall annually monitor the measures adopted under this subsection to determine their effect and may revise or rescind them as appropriate.

(5)(a) Not later than July 1, 1998, the department shall prepare a list of methods used by counties and cities in carrying out the types of activities required by this section. The department shall provide this information and appropriate technical assistance to

counties and cities required to or choosing to comply with the provisions of this section.

(b) By December 31, 2007, the department shall submit to the appropriate committees of the legislature a report analyzing the effectiveness of the activities described in this section in achieving the goals envisioned by the county-wide planning policies and the comprehensive plans and development regulations of the counties and cities.

(6) From funds appropriated by the legislature for this purpose, the department shall provide grants to counties, cities, and regional planning organizations required under subsection (7) of this section to conduct the review and perform the evaluation required by this section.

(7) The provisions of this section shall apply to counties, and the cities within those counties, that were greater than one hundred fifty thousand in population in 1995 as determined by office of financial management population estimates and that are located west of the crest of the Cascade mountain range. Any other county planning under RCW 36.70A.040 may carry out the review, evaluation, and amendment programs and procedures as provided in this section.

[1997 c 429 § 25.]